United Nations A/54/926

General Assembly

Distr.: General
22 June 2000
English
Original: French

Fifty-fourth session
Agenda item 116 (b)
Human rights questions: Human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms

Letter dated 20 June 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to draw your attention to the statement issued on 19 June 2000 by the Presidency of the European Union, on behalf of the European Union, on the Estonian Language Law and the State Integration Programme (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex distributed as a document of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) António **Monteiro**
Permanent Representative of Portugal
to the United Nations

00-49769 (E) 260600 260600

Annex to the letter dated 20 June 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on The Estonian Language Law and the State Integration Programme

The European Union welcomes the Estonian Parliament's adoption on 14 June of amendments to the language law. The Union notes with satisfaction that European Union recommendations have been taken into account, thus bringing the law largely in conformity with the Europe Agreement. The Union supports the statement on the language law by the High Commissioner for National Minorities, Mr. Max van der Stoel, in which he concludes that the law now largely complies with international standards. The Union trusts that the proper implementation of the law will be ensured.

At the same time, the European Union acknowledges the Estonian government decision to adopt in March 2000 the State Integration Programme for the years 2000-2007. The State Integration Programme, complemented with a proper implementation plan, offers substantial scope for strengthening the process within Estonian society towards the integration of the non-Estonian-speaking minority.

The Union considers these steps taken by Estonia as most encouraging signs of positive development in the integration process and will continue to work in close cooperation with the Estonian authorities to support this objective.